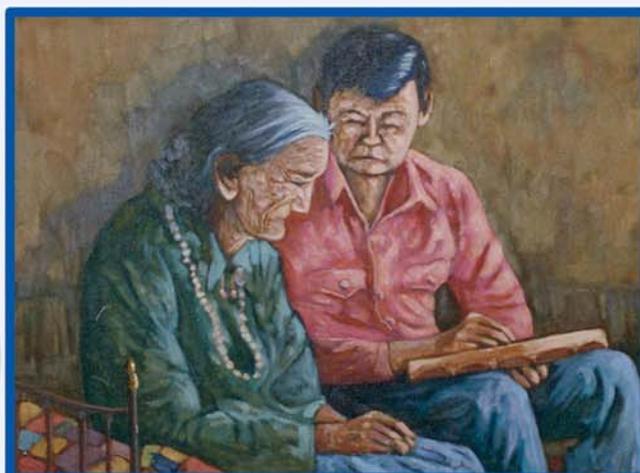
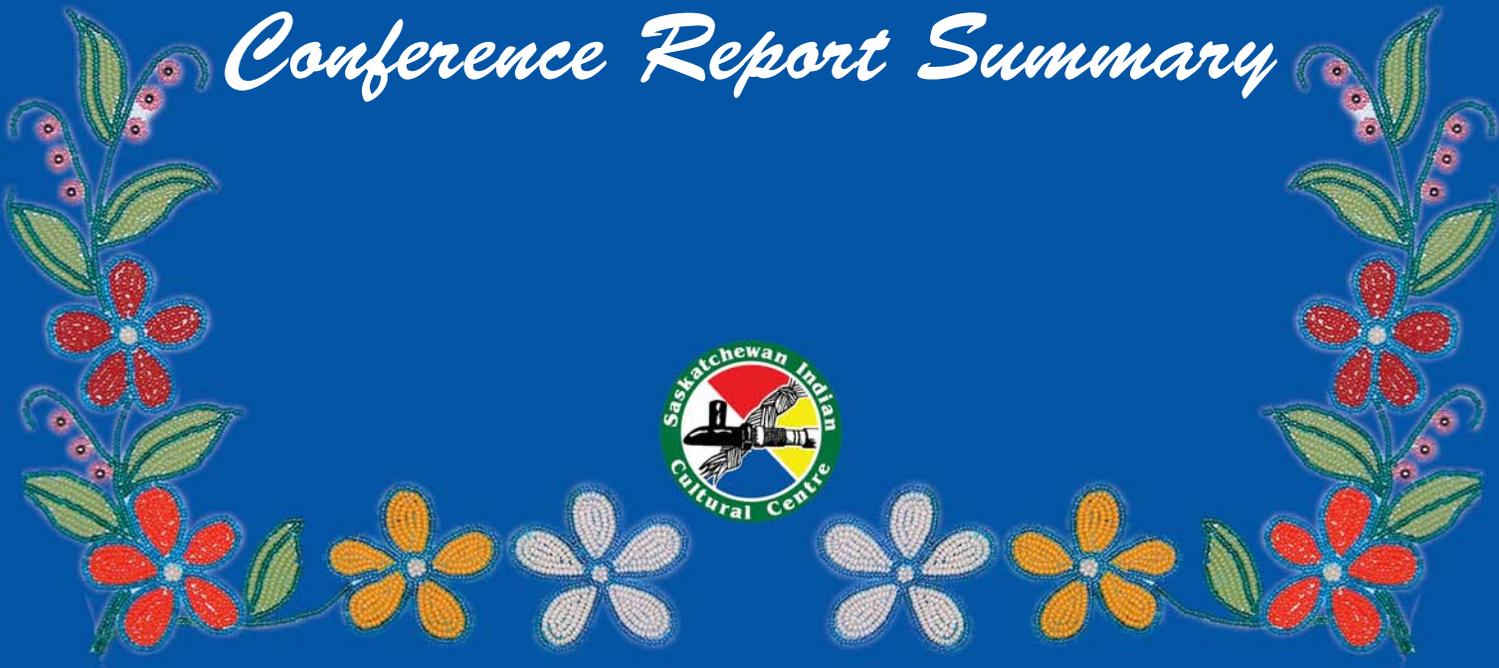


First Nations **LANGUAGE KEEPERS** CONFERENCE

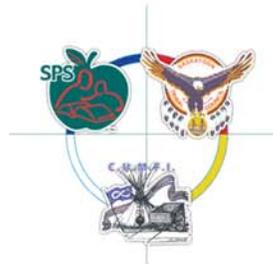


December 2 & 3, 2010 - Saskatoon Inn, Saskatoon, SK. Canada

Conference Report Summary



Sponsors of the 2010 First Nations Language Keepers Conference





FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE KEEPERS CONFERENCE DAY 1 SUMMARY – TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2010

The proceedings for December 2, 2010 began with a pipe ceremony conducted by Elder William Rattfoot. The Morning Song was done by Barry Ahenakew of the Cultural Centre and the Opening Prayer was provided by Elder Dolly Neapetung. These are an integral part of the conference proceedings and are intended for the benefit and well being of the conference delegates.

Master of Ceremonies Elder Howard Walker introduced Chief Guy Lonechild of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. Chief Lonechild welcomed delegates from different nations from across Canada and the United States to this leading First Nations language conference. He emphasized that our youth are the future for First Nations communities and that education is a priority.

President Dorothy Myo of the Cultural Centre welcomed delegates and stated that it is everyone's responsibility as Language Keepers to pass on our First Nations languages and cultures to the next generation. Dorothy extended thanks to the many sponsors who helped make the conference possible.

In keeping with the conference theme, "Empowering First Nations Youth" morning plenary address was given by Jacob Pratt, Dakota Youth Representative and Clayton Tootosis, Cree Youth Representative. Both Jacob and Clayton spoke of the importance of First Nations individuals speaking their language and maintaining their cultures. Jacob discussed how he learned his Dakota language through attending First Nation ceremonies.



Jacob Pratt

There were six concurrent workshop sessions held the morning of Day 1 of the conference.

Day 1 – Morning Concurrent Sessions 1

Nadine Solomon of the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) provided a presentation on Leading the Way: NAHO Role Model Program. This program demonstrates how role models inspire us to improve ourselves, reach for our goals and be the best we can be. The program's message encourages youth to lead their own way in their successful journeys in life.

Valerie Galley gave a presentation on the Cultural Centre's Language Revitalization: A Community Guide. This guide is based on the belief that "language is culture" and that language embodies our own unique cultural understanding of the world. A strategy to retain and revitalize a community's language must be holistic and comprehensive if it is to succeed in reversing the trend of declining language use. This community development model encourages the involvement of all people in a First Nations language community.

Jenise Vangool, Annette Mosquito, Gale Takakenew, Priscilla St. John, Malvina Iron and Jenny Monroe presented on the St. Francis Bilingual Cree Program.

This is the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools first Cree Bilingual program. The program began four years ago with 14 students to over 80 students. The goal is for the students is that every one of them will not only experience and develop the Cree language through integration of culture, language and spiritual development, but will graduate as fluent readers and writers of the English language.

Dr. Heather Blair, co-founder of the Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute (CILLDI) and graduate students Violet Okemaw, Martin Zeidler presented a Review of the Research Literature on Promising Programs, Practices, Curriculum and Teacher Development for Indigenous Language Education.

Charlotte Bird, Barb Barker and Wanda Barker presented on Paving the Way to Language and Cultural Revitalization through the Development of an Ojibwe Language Immersion Program. This presentation outlined how the immersion program began at Wanipigow School of the Frontier School Division in Manitoba. The presenters highlighted the most pressing challenges faced by the immersion program and how they were addressed and shared some of their most successful strategies for teaching the language in their classes.

Bobby Henry and Ross Grandel of the Aboriginal Family Literacy Network presented on the Aboriginal Adult Literacy Assessment Tool. This project built an assessment tool to participate in a more positive, strategic, and valued contribution of Aboriginal knowledge data production. This workshop



described how the project researched Aboriginal ways of collecting data in the five literacy domains of reading, writing, numeracy, oracy, problem solving, and listening. The approach includes cultural and linguistic sensitivity as well as community involvement in the administration of the assessment tool and its results.

The luncheon key note speaker was Be'sha Blondin, a noted Dene traditional healer and environmentalist. Be'Sha spoke eloquently on the teachings of the Dene way of life, culture, healing, ceremonies, medicines, survival skills and the environment. Be'sha was born at Cameron Bay, on Great Bear Lake, NWT. She now makes her home in Yellowknife, NWT and maintains a strong connection to the land. Be'sha advised delegates to maintain their language and keep a close contact to mind and spirit. Be'sha sang a spiritual song in Dene and captivated the conference participants.



Be'sha Blondin

There were three sets of six concurrent workshop sessions held the afternoon of Day 1 of the conference.

Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 1

Dr Stelómethet Ethel B Gardner presented on the Anishinaabemowin Anjimaamino Bijigaade: Pilot Projects. This workshop focused on pilot projects to support research on developing a language plan for Anishinaabemowin language revitalization for Grand Council of Treaty #3 in northern Ontario. The pilot projects included a CD of basic Anishinaabemowin that all community members should know, a standardized language curriculum and a digital storytelling workshop that brings elders and youth together.

Chief Peter Nippi – Kinistin Saulteaux First Nation provided a presentation on Community Language Developments: A Leadership Perspective. He discussed how leadership can lead the way in promoting, preserving and protecting their own First Nations languages in their communities. He emphasized that language is an essential and critical component in our First Nations schools and that encouraging our students to write and speak in their language is part of positive leadership.

Clayton Tootoosis, Cree Youth Representative provided a presentation on language and culture from a youth perspective. The presentation discussed the importance of Language.



Tamara Starblanket provided a presentation on Indigenizing First Nations Curriculum. Her presentation focused on developing a curriculum to support the SICC publication Cultural Teachings: First Nations Protocols and Methodologies.

Gloria Barker and Wanda Barker, Hollow Water First Nation, Manitoba presented on Teaching Aboriginal Language and Culture through Contemporary and Traditional Music and Songs, Stories and Teachings, Puppets, Movement Activities and Games. The workshop promoted the importance of Aboriginal language and culture as a means of regaining a positive self-identity, and guidance and purpose in the pursuit of “Mino-bimaadziwin” or a good balanced life.

Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 2

Randy Morin of the Greater Saskatoon Catholic School Division presented on Teaching the Youth of Today. Randy discussed his many years of experience working with Indigenous people in both rural and urban settings through many capacities and initiatives. He described his teaching of the Cree language in both oral and written forms as well as using technology and knowledge keepers as resources. His presentation discussed why many Indigenous languages are dying and what we can do to preserve and maintain them.

Martin Zeidler, Phd. Student, Elementary Education, University of Alberta gave a presentation on Passing the Torch: Keeping Language Alive with the Master-Apprentice Program. This presentation provided an overview of the benefits of a Master-Apprentice language immersion program. Martin related how many within the Indigenous population, especially younger members, seemingly indifferent, if not outright resistant, to the learning of language.

Keith Goulet provided a presentation on Leadership and the Colonization of the Cree Language. This presentation showed that colonization is not only embedded in stories but also in the actual grammar of the Cree language.

Dr. S. Neyooxet Greymorning of the University of Montana gave a presentation entitled: Teaching Meadowlark Children Their Songs. The presentation related the belief among the Arapaho that the Meadowlark speaks the Arapaho language. As a result of this, one still can occasionally find the practice of feeding a child the tongues of Meadowlarks, to bring about speech when it has been delayed. Neyooxet’s presentation discussed dramatic results of an innovative approach for second language instruction and acquisition he developed called Accelerated Second Language Acquisition[©]™.

Sylvia Weenie, Sweetgrass First Nation presented on Teaching Cree Language and Resource Development. She discussed the challenges of language teachers creating their own materials and working with limited resources. Such creativity and resourcefulness is a necessity when working with First Nations languages because material and language writers are not readily available.



Paul Daigneault and Kurtis McAdam presented a workshop on Wesakechak teachings through the use of skits with volunteers from the participants. The players use Cree in the skits with a mixture of Michif and English promoting and teaching Aboriginal languages by interactively engaging the audience to repeat Cree words and their explaining their meanings throughout the skits.



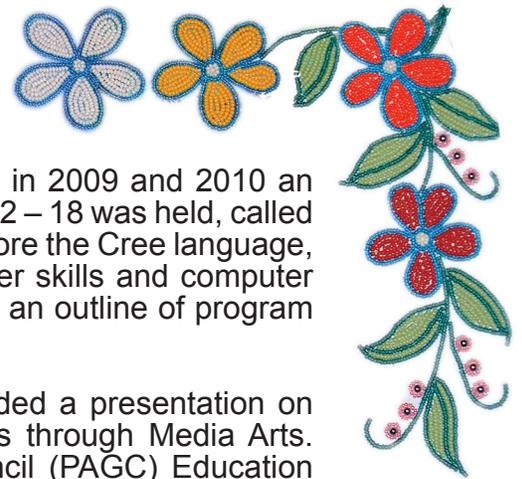
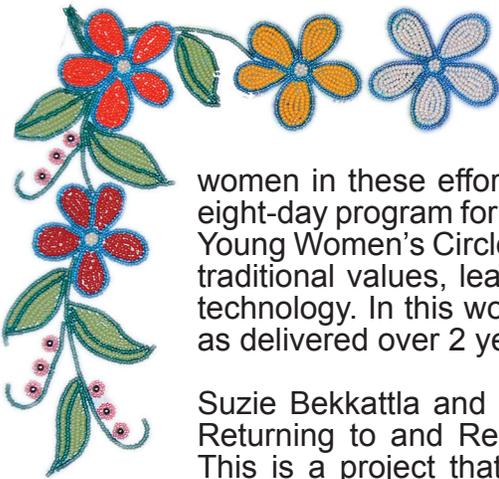
Conference participants

Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 3

John Spyglass, SICC curator, gave a presentation on Learning Culture through Arts. This workshop examined and discussed the artwork presented from the SICC's Art Collection. The SICC Art Collection consists of historical documents and photographs, Elders Interviews, Artwork, and archaeological material, all contributing to the preservation of Saskatchewan First Nations Culture and Language. This workshop enhanced the participants' knowledge of First Nations Artwork and how it can contribute to cultural education.

Belinda Daniels provided a presentation on Nehiyawak Cree Language Camps and Language Methodologies. The nêhiyawak Cree Language Camp co-ordinated by Belinda Daniels has been held annually in the summers for seven years. This camp focuses on the heart of nêhiyaw philosophy and worldview with an outdoor experience. All participants experience language learning in a peaceful environment and are exposed to the subtle tipi/medicine wheel teachings.

Dr. Heather Blair, co-founder of the Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute (CILLDI) and graduate student Violet Okemaw and Janine Tine, Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools Division, presented on Language Warriors: The Young Women's Circle of Leadership. The presenters discussed how women are often thought of as the keepers of language and if Indigenous languages are to survive the role of young



women in these efforts is very important. At CILLDI in 2009 and 2010 an eight-day program for young Aboriginal women ages 12 – 18 was held, called Young Women's Circle of Leadership (YWCL), to explore the Cree language, traditional values, leadership, contemporary life/career skills and computer technology. In this workshop the presenters provided an outline of program as delivered over 2 years.

Suzie Bekkattla and Rosalie Tsannie- Burseth provided a presentation on Returning to and Reviving our First Peoples Stories through Media Arts. This is a project that the Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC) Education Department will undertake in 28 schools. This project will showcase the community treasures in language and culture, focusing on the customs and ways of the people in each of the communities of PAGC. Through the use of media the youth are empowered to become active participants in the acquisition of their community profiles and the creation of resources for future use in the school system.

Brenda Kayseas and Sandra Kayseas of the Fishing Lake First Nation School presented on Nahkawē Language Teaching. The presenters shared their experiences teaching the Nahkawē language in their community and within their school.

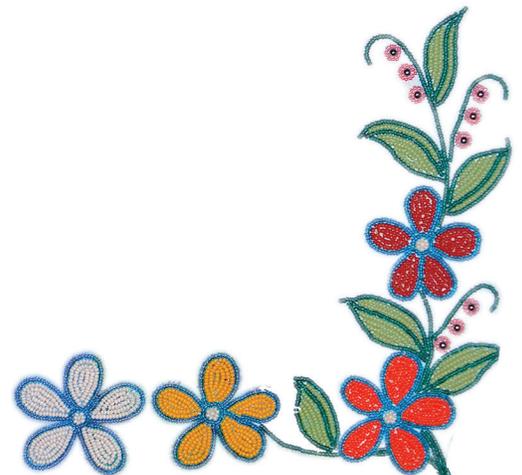
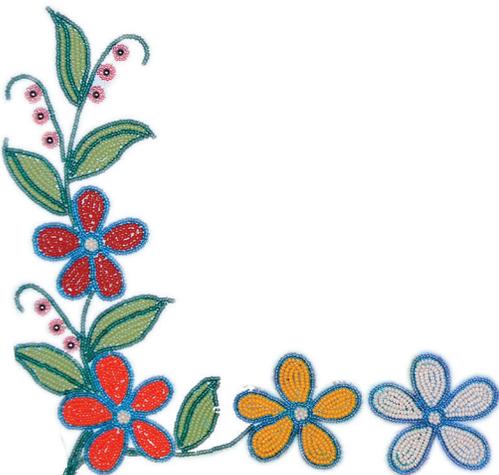
Alvine Mountain Horse presented on Teaching the Blackfoot Language and Using Technology - Inquiry Based Learning Used to Help Immersion Students Preserve Language and Elders Knowledge. She discussed how learning language from a book and actually creating the knowledge of the language orally are two ways of learning, but are really quite different from each other. The presentation covered how the use of inquiry based learning and real life experiences contribute dramatically to the overall confidence level of the students as speakers.

Closing Prayer

The closing prayer for the Day 1 sessions was provided by Elder Dolly Neapetung.

Community Feast and Round Dance

Day 1 concluded with a feast and Round Dance that took place at the First Nations University of Canada – Saskatoon Campus.





Round Dance



Artwork by *Edmund Bull*

Edmund Bull



FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE KEEPERS CONFERENCE DAY 2 SUMMARY – FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2010

The proceedings for December 3, 2010 began with a pipe ceremony conducted by Elder William Rattfoot. The Morning Song and the Opening Prayer was provided by Elder William Rattfoot. Master of Ceremonies Howard Walker introduced Sylvia McAdam, Interim Director of Languages for the Cultural Centre. Sylvia discussed the importance of language and culture to First Nations sovereignty and nationhood.

The Day 2 welcoming addresses were given by FSIN Powwow Princess Chenaya Taypotat from the Kahkewistahaw First Nation. Chenaya spoke of the importance of First Nations youth leading drug and alcohol free lifestyles in order to maintain a strong connection to their culture and language. FSIN Youth Representative Evan Chamakese discussed the importance of kinship and how ceremonies, songs and prayer helped his brother overcome hardships that many First Nations youth face today. As well, Evan talked about how his brother has become a role model for himself.

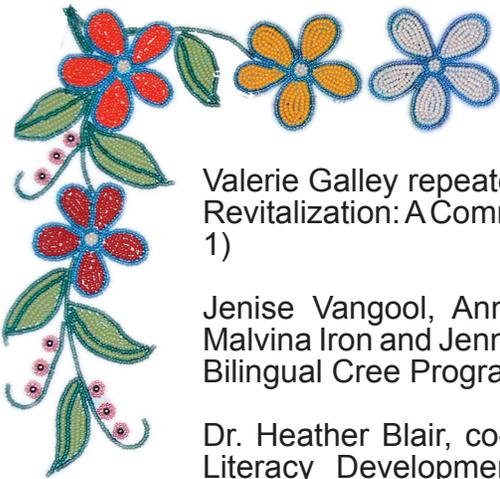


FSIN Powwow Princess Chenaya Taypotat

There were two sets of six concurrent workshop sessions held the morning of Day 2 of the conference.

Day 2 – Morning Concurrent Sessions 1

Nadine Solomon of the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) repeated her presentation on Leading the Way: NAHO Role Model Program. (See Day 1 Morning Concurrent Sessions 1)



Valerie Galley repeated her presentation on the Cultural Centre's Language Revitalization: A Community Guide. (See Day 1 Morning Concurrent Sessions 1)

Jenise Vangool, Annette Mosquito, Gale Takakenew, Priscilla St. John, Malvina Iron and Jenny Monroe repeated their presentation on the St. Francis Bilingual Cree Program. (See Day 1 Morning Concurrent Sessions 1)

Dr. Heather Blair, co-founder of the Canadian Indigenous Languages and Literacy Development Institute (CILLDI) and graduate students Violet Okemaw, Martin Zeidler repeated their presentation on a Review of the Research Literature on Promising Programs, Practices, Curriculum and Teacher Development for Indigenous Language Education. (See Day 1 Morning Concurrent Sessions 1)

Charlotte Bird, Barb Barker and Wanda Barker repeated their presentation on Paving the Way to Language and Cultural Revitalization through the Development of an Ojibwe Language Immersion Program. (See Day 1 Morning Concurrent Sessions 1)

The First Nations and Metis Unit of Saskatoon Public Schools provided a presentation on Creating and Developing Culturally Responsive Schools. This presentation discussed the school division's efforts to steer towards decolonization.

Day 2 – Morning Concurrent Sessions 2

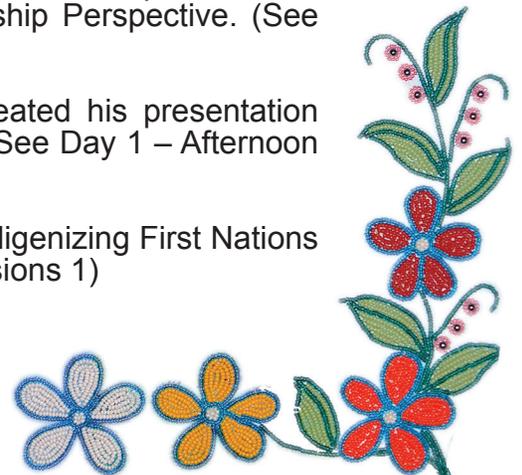
Sylvia McAdam, Carol Glazer, Saskatchewan Prevention Institute and Harry Lafond provided a presentation on Elders Traditional Teachings on DVD. This presentation gave an overview of a partnership formed by the SICC, Saskatchewan Prevention Institute and the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies. This partnership will develop a DVD with interviews of First Nations Elders discussing and sharing issues of respect for young First Nations people regarding their bodies, relationships and culture.

Dr Stelómethet Ethel B Gardner repeated her presentation on the Anishinaabemowin Anjimaamino Bijigaade: Pilot Projects. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 1)

Chief Peter Nippi – Kinistin Saulteaux First Nation repeated his presentation on Community Language Developments: A Leadership Perspective. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 1)

Clayton Tootosis, Cree Youth Representative repeated his presentation on language and culture from a youth perspective. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 1)

Tamara Starblanket repeated her presentation on Indigenizing First Nations Curriculum. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 1)





Gloria Barker and Wanda Barker, Hollow Water First Nation, Manitoba repeated their presentation on Teaching Aboriginal Language and Culture through Contemporary and Traditional Music and Songs, Stories and Teachings, Puppets, Movement Activities and Games. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 1)

Keynote Address

The luncheon keynote address for Day 2 was provided by Gary Merasty, Vice President Corporate Responsibility for Cameco Corporation. Gary is a fluent Cree speaker and an excellent role model for First Nations youth. In his career he has transitioned seamlessly from a teacher to Tribal Grand Chief, federal member of parliament and corporate executive in one of the top 100 companies in Canada. Gary delivered an inspiring message about the importance of First Nations maintaining their languages in order to remain distinct peoples. He also issued a challenge to leadership and language professionals to advocate for the official status of First Nations languages in Canada. Gary asserted this can only happen if First Nations unite and lobby collectively to the Government of Canada.



Gary Merasty

There were two sets of six concurrent workshop sessions held the afternoon of Day 2 of the conference.

Day 2 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 1

Joanne Goodpipe provided a presentation on the SICC Youth Strategy. The vision of the SICC Youth Language and Culture Strategy is to strengthen and support First Nations youth identity and to re-establish First Nations language and culture through our children. When complete, the SICC Youth Language and Culture Strategy will be a framework, or master plan, to guide

First Nations communities in developing youth development strategies and plans to meet their own specific circumstances.

John Spyglass, SICCC curator, repeated his presentation on Learning Culture through Arts. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 2)

Martin Zeidler, Phd. Student, Elementary Education, University of Alberta repeated his presentation on Passing the Torch: Keeping Language Alive with the Master-Apprentice Program. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 1).

Sylvia Weenie, Sweetgrass First Nation repeated her presentation on Teaching Cree Language and Resource Development. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 1)

Dr. S. Neyooxet Greymorning of the University of Montana repeated his presentation entitled: Teaching Meadowlark Children Their Songs. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 1)

Alvine Mountain Horse repeated her presentation on Teaching the Blackfoot Language and Using Technology - Inquiry Based Learning Used to Help Immersion Students Preserve Language and Elders Knowledge. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 2)

Day 2 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 2

Sakewew Substance Awareness and Empowerment for Youth Group provided a presentation on the use of traditional language and culture to counter the use of drugs and alcohol. Sakewew High School is in North Battleford, Saskatchewan.

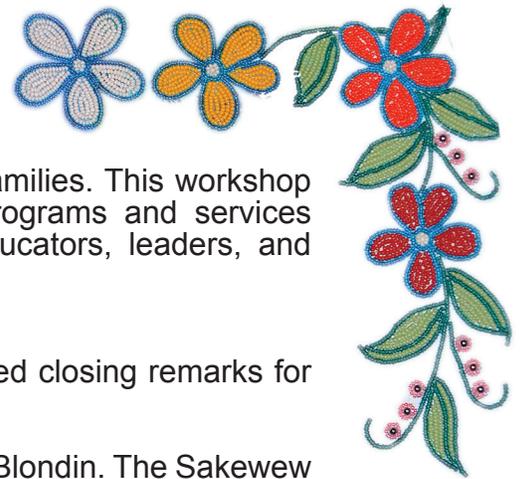
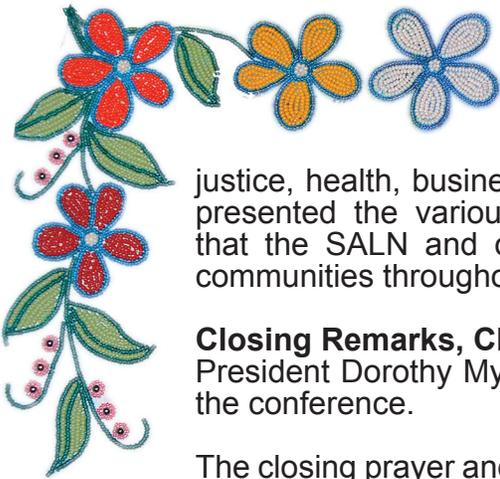
Paul Daigneault and Kurtis McAdam repeated their workshop on Wesakechak teachings through the use of skits with volunteers from the participants. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 1)

Joanne Goodpipe repeated her presentation on the SICCC Youth Strategy. (See Day 2 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 1)

Suzie Bekkattla and Rosalie Tsannie- Burseth repeated their presentation on Returning to and Reviving our First Peoples Stories through Media Arts. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 3)

Brenda Kayseas and Sandra Kayseas of the Fishing Lake First Nation School repeated their presentation on Nahkawē Language Teaching. (See Day 1 – Afternoon Concurrent Sessions 3)

Alana Ross, Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Network (SALN) provided a presentation on Aboriginal Family Literacy: A Community-Based Approach. Family literacy is a growing field that incorporates the involvement, skills, and resources of educators, community leaders from many sectors (including



justice, health, business, and social services), and families. This workshop presented the various Aboriginal Family literacy programs and services that the SALN and other organizations offer to educators, leaders, and communities throughout Saskatchewan.

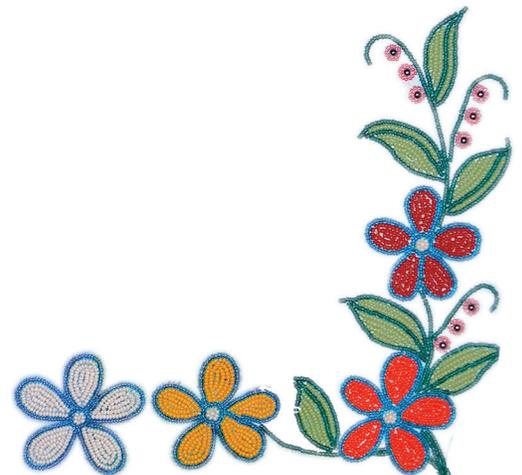
Closing Remarks, Closing Song and Prayer

President Dorothy Myo of the Cultural Centre provided closing remarks for the conference.

The closing prayer and song was provided by Be'sha Blondin. The Sakewew High School drum and dance troupe performed a Pow wow demonstration and Round Dance song to close the conference proceedings.



Sakewew Dance Troupe





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